UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY CIVIL ACTION NO. 15-3579 (FLW)

NATIONAL FREIGHT, INC., : TRANSCRIPT OF SHOW CAUSE HEARING FOR

Plaintiff,

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: CAUSE HEARING FOR : PRELIMINARY

V. : INJUNCTION

ANDREW P.SIDAMON-ERISTOFF :

et al.,

Defendants

: JULY 29, 2015

CLARKSON S. FISHER UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE 402 EAST STATE STREET, TRENTON, NJ 08608

B E F O R E: THE HONORABLE FREDA L. WOLFSON, USDJ

A P P E A R A N C E S:

REED SMITH, LLP

BY: DIANE GREEN-KELLY, ESQUIRE (Illinois)

KELLIE A. LAVERY, ESQUIRE On behalf of the Plaintiff

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

BY: JONATHAN B. PEITZ, DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

On behalf of the Defendants

ALSOPRESENT:

SCOTT E. BRUCKER, ESQUIRE SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT & GENERAL COUNSEL

* * * * *

VINCENT RUSSONIELLO, CCR, CRR OFFICIAL U.S.COURT REPORTER (609)588-9516

CERTIFICATE

PURSUANT TO TITLE 28, U.S.C., SECTION 753, THE FOLLOWING TRANSCRIPT IS CERTIFIED TO BE AN ACCURATE TRANSCRIPTION OF MY STENOGRAPHIC NOTES IN THE ABOVE-ENTITLED MATTER.

S/Vincent Russoniello
VINCENT RUSSONIELLO, CCR
OFFICIAL U.S. COURT REPORTER

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            (In open court.)
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            THE CLERK: All rise.
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            THE COURT: Thank you.
            May I have the appearances, please. For the
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    plaintiff.
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            MS. LAVERY: Good morning, your Honor.
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            Kellie Lavery from Reed Smith. I'm here with
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    my colleague Diane Green-Kelly who will be arguing
    this morning and our client Scott Brucker.
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            MR. PEITZ: Good morning, your Honor.
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            Jonathan B. Peitz, Deputy Attorney General, on
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    behalf of the defendants.
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            And just so your Honor is aware, in the
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    courtroom today is Bob Davidson who is one of the
    defendants. He is sitting in the first row.
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            THE COURT: Thank you. You can feel free, if
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    he would like to sit with you, if you want him to sit
    with you.
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            MR. PEITZ: I think he's okay, your Honor.
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            THE COURT: Okay. Have a seat everyone.
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    Thank you.
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            Let me begin. Obviously, there are several
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    bases on which the plaintiff has moved to enjoin the
    State from escheating this property under the
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    Unclaimed Property Act.
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            First of all, let me start with, one of the
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    arguments that the State has made with regard to
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    sovereign immunity is only as to state law claims.
    Correct?
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                        Yes, your Honor.
            MR. PEITZ:
            THE COURT: And I don't think you've really
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    responded to the state law claims.
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            MS. GREEN-KELLY: No.
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            THE COURT: Only sovereign immunity of course
    doesn't apply to the injunctive relief you're arguing
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    as to the constitutional claims.
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            MS. GREEN-KELLY: Correct. And in terms of
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    the dollars, all of the dollars are subsumed in our
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    preemption and constitutional law claims. So the
    injunctive relief that we are requesting with or
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    without the state law claim is still -- would cover
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    the whole remainder of the assessment.
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            THE COURT: I understand what your argument
        We are not addressing state law claims today.
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    Right?
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            MS. GREEN-KELLY: Correct.
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            MR. PEITZ: Yes, your Honor.
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            THE COURT:
                        All right.
            So I'll deal with the priority arguments under
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    the Texas line of cases last because frankly that is
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the one that has the traction to it. I'm going to start instead with the other arguments that have been made that have taken up a fair amount of the briefing with regard to federal preemption under the Interstate Commerce Commission Termination Act known as the ICCA and the commerce clause arguments that the plaintiff has made in this case.

Now, first thing is -- is it Ms. Green-Kelly.

MS. GREEN-KELLY: Yes.

THE COURT: I have to say that I was a little surprised by the fact that many of the arguments you are making in this connection as to why you believe there would be preemption which are based upon certain factual representations that appear in your verified complaint, and it is a verified complaint, but those are conclusory allegations, and this is your burden on a preliminary injunction to satisfy the Court, statements such as, it is industry practice, without any backup for it by certification or reference is not going to do it.

Statements such as, many of our or most of our contracts have an 18 to 24-month period by which requests for refunds must be made, having a simple statement in a verified complaint as to an allegation as to that doesn't do it without providing me with any

contracts that actually show me language, and that's this case, or telling me, in fact, how many contracts we are talking about out of your total contracts and how that could impact therefore rates.

So I have to say, I was a bit surprised by the proofs that have been provided. It's a different argument on the priority arguments, but it's absent.

MS. GREEN-KELLY: Your Honor, may I respond?

THE COURT: Please.

MS. GREEN-KELLY: Well, the defendants have attached to the affidavit of Mr. Shah as Exhibit E a copy of the report, the audit report, that supports the credits and in that report they describe what these are.

The bottom line is this, is they are all credits that arise from customer payments for the purchase of transportation and the nature of those credits is what is at issue.

THE COURT: Simply saying that isn't going to do it for me. On a likelihood of success under the ICCA, I will tell you, I'm not buying it. I've looked at all of the cases. Simply saying the fact they happen to be credits doesn't show me why it would preempt it under the statute which talks about, "a state may not enact or enforce a law, regulation, or

refunds. They are not yours. You are saying it's all built into the rates, et cetera. I really don't have anything to give me that conclusion. What the case law talks about is looking to the delivery of the services or the setting of rates.

I frankly have nothing that would indicate to me that those kinds of situations do affect your rates. Like I said, a mere allegation in a complaint, even though verified in a conclusory fashion, is not going to do it.

I have found in some of these cases certainly things you would think would be much closer to it and nonetheless they have found that they are not preempted, down to the <u>Dilts</u> case which the Supreme Court denied cert on now in 2015 out of the Ninth Circuit where they talked about meal and rest breaks and how that could factor into how prices are set, the routes that they use, or the services they provide.

The Ninth Circuit said that it does not meet
the "related to" test just because it shifts
incentives and makes it more costly for motor carriers
to choose some routes or services relative to others,
and they were not preempted. The Supreme Court denied
cert.

I can go through a number of others where your

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         analysis just doesn't on a likelihood of success fly.
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         But more importantly, as I've said, I can't tell you
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         at the end of the day if this goes through discovery
         and where we are if you could be successful on a
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         likelihood of success and what you've provided me on
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         this record, absolutely not.
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                 MS. GREEN-KELLY: Your Honor, may I respond?
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                 THE COURT: Sure.
                 MS. GREEN-KELLY: As I'll point out again, the
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         audit report for the credits provide the facts. These
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         are the findings that the State actually --
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                 THE COURT: Which exhibit are you referencing?
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                 MS. GREEN-KELLY: It's Exhibit E to the Shah
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         declaration. It's docket number 15-6.
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                 THE COURT: Which page would you like me to
         look at?
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                 MS. GREEN-KELLY: Look at page 10 and it
         starts in the long paragraph at the bottom.
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                 So they are talking about the P credits, which
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         are the ones that are at issue here, and they are
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         saying that the P credits are unresolved items --
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         these are arising from accounts receivable, from
         customer payments.
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24 If you turn onto again carrying over to page 25 11, the credit is reclassified as a refund liability

services.

and moved to an account. These are potential refunds if they, in fact, are owed to customers who purchase transportation services which is what NFI offers.

That's what they offer. They sell transportation

So in the <u>Statland</u> case, for example, the Seventh Circuit said that if it's refunds, it relates to rates. Here is the thing. The ICCA deregulates. It's different when you have --

THE COURT: The <u>Statland</u> case that you are referencing, those dealt with canceled ticket refunds, and they said that they relate to rates, and they said under the ADA states cannot regulate -- they are the airlines, American Airlines -- ticket refund practices by common law or by statute.

Indeed, in the <u>Statland</u> case, the Airline

Deregulation Act, the Supreme Court noted, and has

been noted elsewhere, is broader than the ICCA, in

that case we were dealing with breach of fiduciary

duty, violation of consumer fraud, et cetera. I do

not find that that case is going to help you here, nor

do I find it convincing vis-à-vis the other cases.

It's your obligation, by the way, to show that issuing these credits really is related ultimately to your price setting. You haven't done it.

What I've really told you today -- and I'm not telling you, would you ever be able to convince me -- today is a preliminary injunction hearing. It's a likelihood of success hearing. You have not given me anything, anything to back this up other than the bald allegation that it does affect it. I don't have analysis from you. I don't have underlying documentation. I don't see how this has been done.

All the comments you make -- and this applies to the Commerce Act clauses, as well, but there are other arguments on the Commerce Act -- talk about industry standards, any of these things, you haven't told me about another company doing this.

I don't know why it appears the way it is. As I said, I don't know what you could produce in the future, what you might do, but on this record it doesn't do it.

MS. GREEN-KELLY: Your Honor, a lot of this goes to the fact that there is a derivative right here. The State doesn't have a direct right. They only have the right to take custody of what the customer has. The audit report identifies that these are customer amounts. These are amounts that customers paid for transportation of services. That's the nature of what it is.

The State is now trying to essentially say, we would like to take those refunds, potential refunds, and give it back to NFI customers in violation of what may be NFI's policies.

THE COURT: Let me stop you right there.

That's the word you just said. That may well be in violation of NFI's policy. Again, putting the words may well be or what occurred, you haven't given me a record to make that determination.

What I'm trying to tell you is, and it's clear we are having a disconnect here, maybe the things that you are saying could carry some weight, but I have some questions about that, but factually might carry some weight on some other argument, but you haven't given me that. You are arguing here but without the proof behind it. It is your burden on a preliminary injunction hearing. It's a drastic remedy.

MS. GREEN-KELLY: The complaint is verified. The facts in the complaint are verified by Gary Nichols.

THE COURT: I've said this to you. That's it.

They are bald allegations. I've gone to your verified complaint. They are verified. Let's go through it right now. With nothing, again, backing them up and I do not have to accept bald conclusions of factual

statements that are not backed up, and I've gone back to the way they have been stated and that's all they are.

For instance, I know you've cited to paragraph 70: "If the amounts of customer credits are subject to escheat generally, there will be a significant impact on carrier rates because of lost revenue, as well as increased cost of compliance with more than 50 state escheat laws, including administration costs, additional personnel and accounting expenses to track credits and conduct extensive additional due diligence to resolve discrepancies involving thousands of transactions."

Last sentence of that paragraph: "The loss of revenue and increased costs likely will result in increased prices."

There is no meat to that allegation. It has not provided me any facts, any documents, any calculations as to what the administration costs would be, what kind of personnel would be required, what additionally would be required, what kind of accounting would have to be done, what is different, what is this supposedly additional due diligence to resolve discrepancies, none of that.

And then to say will likely result in

increased costs, again, this may be one of my first cases for a preliminary injunction where I have no certifications from the parties seeking the injunctive relief, certifications that give further explanation and attach the backup documentation and the explanation. I don't have it here.

So what I'm saying is, yes, I understand he makes it. Those are conclusions. They are essential arguments to me because they are in such a general, general fashion.

"...significant additional administrative costs related to compliance, including sending due diligence letters by certified mail with respect to hundreds of credits," well, that doesn't tell me really what it would cost, how many customers we are talking about normally would be related to that, and that once you kind of set up a system really what the additional administrative burdens are, and the fact that there may be some isn't the issue.

If you remember the <u>American Express</u> case -we'll get to that because you'll really love that one
for the last argument on priority -- in there, in
fact, they demanded that at the point of sale there be
additional information taken which obviously American

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Express argued, or the card purchaser said, it's an additional burden, but we said too bad, so sad on that. That's what happens sometimes, additional burdens. There may be costs. So your general allegations without support aren't going to do it.
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MS. GREEN-KELLY: Your Honor, the preemption argument for the ICCA is about a federal deregulation, and the Supreme Court in Morales has said that as long as it doesn't have -- if it's anything more than just tenuous, it's preempted, and here what's happening is the State is regulating them. It's a deregulation federal statute.

THE COURT: I think the Supreme Court cases and other cases do a little more than what you say, and I think you are reading that pretty broadly because then we go to what are the different situations where this has occurred.

MS. GREEN-KELLY: Well, for example, in Rowe

v. New Jersey Motor Transport Association that was a

statute that wasn't even regulating motor vehicles.

It was regulating tobacco retailers and telling them

what things they had to do to deliver and --

THE COURT: No, no. There it says -- what you talk about there, though, is it did affect how the delivery would occur.

MS. GREEN-KELLY: But it was an indirect -the statute itself was not regulating motor carriers.

It was regulating tobacco retailers, and the effect of
it was that the motor carrier was going to have to
confirm who the delivery was made to and to make sure
that they were 21-year old to receive tobacco.

It wasn't the statute that was even directed at motor carriers, and yet the Supreme Court held that there was preemption because it had the indirect effect of requiring the motor carrier to do something they might not want to do.

This is the same situation. This is an indirect effect, and under Morales and under Rowe an indirect effect is a not, an indirect effect on how NFI handles credits from customers. It really doesn't matter how many dollars they are going to spend. For the commerce clause claim maybe. For the preemption argument the amount of money, the exact amount of money that it is going to cost is not relevant because what's relevant is that it has an indirect effect on rates.

THE COURT: You haven't convinced me it has an effect on rates. That's part of the problem. If you look at the <u>Dan's City</u> case, which is a Supreme Court 2013 case which talks about, the law must concern a

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motor carrier's transportation of property, and of course defines transportation as services relating to the movement of property, and there what occurred was obviously the car once it had been towed was disposed of. And it says that that's not sufficiently connected to a motor carriers's service with respect to the transportation of property.
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Obviously, here, it doesn't affect transportation of property. You are suggesting it affect rates. And what I'm telling you is, you have not adequately represented to me on this record that it does affect rates.

MS. GREEN-KELLY: Because it affects refund policies.

THE COURT: Saying that statement alone doesn't do it. I'm sorry. I reject your argument. It has to have some sort of significant economic effect and affecting rates, and you have not convinced me that it does.

Similarly, if you look at the Seventh Circuit case of <u>Nationwide Freight Systems</u> where that was indeed a licensing statute, they said that the economic effect, if there was one, would be insignificant.

I cannot on this record -- merely saying that

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it can have an effect, that's not what the law
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    requires, and you have not on this record shown me
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    that it would have more than an insignificant effect.
    That's why I have to reject your argument as well.
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            On a likelihood of success, that's where we
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    are, you haven't done it. There may be some arguments
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    you could make. There may be some arguments you could
    make even on what your contracts are. I don't even
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    have the contracts to look at them.
            Next, turning to your commerce clause
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    argument, I don't think you've made any showing of an
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    effect on interstate commerce, nor could I find on
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    this record you've shown an incidental effect on
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    interstate customers. So I'm not accepting the
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    commerce argument.
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            I do want to now turn to the Texas priority
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    arguments. It's your turn, Mr. Peitz, because you are
    on the ropes on this one.
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            MR. PEITZ: Good morning, your Honor.
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            THE COURT: Good morning.
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            So all we are talking about here is, because
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obviously I've determined that you haven't made a showing with regard to the ICCA or the commerce clause, any of the in-state escheat is not going to be the issues on the Texas priority.

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            MR. PEITZ: Yes, your Honor.
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            THE COURT: What we are talking about is
    out-of-state creditors. Now, the question I have here
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    is, what I understood is, virtually all of them have
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    last known addresses. Is that correct?
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            MS. GREEN-KELLY: Yes.
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            THE COURT: Okay.
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            MR. PEITZ: With respect to whether the
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    records were available, they had the last known
    addresses, there was a large estimated period where it
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    was presumed there were no addresses. So all the
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    amounts were taken for New Jersey.
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            THE COURT: We'll break this up. For which
    last known addresses are known. We also know every
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    state has an escheat statute now. Correct?
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            MR. PEITZ: Yes, your Honor.
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            THE COURT: Okay. I don't know how you get
    past the first priority rule.
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            MR. PEITZ: Well, your Honor, the State is
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    taking under the second priority.
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            THE COURT: I know you are. You don't get to
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    the second is what I'm saying. How do you even get to
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    the second when under the first priority rule you have
    a last known address? That's supposed to be the end
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    of it, and the last known address, and that there is
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an escheat statute.

As you know, as the Third Circuit said in the American Express case, the right to escheat is also the right to decide not to escheat a particular kind of property. So to the extent that some of these states either have dormancy periods that are different, have periods that kind of toll the escheat while they are still in the business-to-business relationship or other things, or simply choose not to act, the fact that they have an escheat statute and the last known address is known, that's the end of the inquiry. You stop at Step 1. You never go to Step 2.

MR. PEITZ: Well, your Honor, the Step 1, if the first state does not escheat or their laws do not escheat that property, if they have an exception made for that property, then the second state has the authority to take that property because they have sovereign rights over the -- what the Courts have called -- the other party to the transportation.

THE COURT: Where anywhere in the law have you found something that supports that statement that the fact that a state has an escheat law, but has decided not to act on it or has decided to exempt a particular kind of property, now throws you into the second priority rule?

I don't know of any. And frankly if you read the <u>American Express</u> case, the Third Circuit opinion, put aside my own, you don't get there.

MR. PEITZ: Well, your Honor, it's the language of the <u>Texas</u> case. When they are determining what the first priority is, what the second priority is, and how you get to the second priority, they say if the first state does not escheat that property, you move to the second state --

think it's the fact that they don't escheat. At some period of time there were many states that didn't have escheat statutes. When those cases were decided, there were not 50 states with escheat statutes.

That's a more modern concept that they've all done that now. So they were looking at if you are dealing with a state that does not have an escheat practice.

That's why you get the language in the Third Circuit. By the way, we are still on the Third Circuit. That's why you get the law in the Third Circuit that said the power to escheat is also the power to decide not to escheat. And what they are talking about is not to escheat a certain kind of property, not if you don't have an escheat statute. If you don't have an escheat statute, the Circuit

would agree, okay, now, you are open. You go to Step 2.

MR. PEITZ: I believe the Third Circuit, your Honor, was discussing when the second priority state does not escheat, because in the cases, the American
Express, New Jersey Retail Merchants was a question about whether or not a third priority --

THE COURT: You really ended up in the wrong place, didn't you, the Judge who decided those and wrote it? I think I kind of know what happened. So go ahead.

MR. PEITZ: I understand, your Honor.

The issue in that case was whether or not a third priority would be created which would take away from the second priority state authority to escheat or not escheat that property.

The state of first priority has the first shot to take that. But if they make the determination not to, the second state, because they still have sovereign rights over that company that's incorporated in New Jersey in this case, still have the authority over the sovereignty over that company to take that property since they are the other party to the transportation. They are the creditor state.

So if the debtor state makes that

determination, it doesn't take away from the second priority state's authority. It just simply allows that state to make that call.

The purpose behind saying that a state has the right not to escheat, the Court was saying, well, because states may want to bring companies into their state. They want to entice companies to come in because we don't escheat this property.

To have a state such as, I was going to say,
Arizona that may not have that escheat statute that
covers the property, there is no enticement to bring a
company in if they decide not to as a state of last
known address. That purpose only comes in for the
state of incorporation because they want to entice a
company to come into their state and say, if you come
in here under the second priority, you won't have to
turn it over.

That's what they were discussing. The states still have their sovereign rights over NFI. We are taking the property under the second priority because the <u>Texas</u> case did say, when the first state doesn't escheat the property, the property, they were very specific, and that's why I believe that the second state, in this case, New Jersey, still has the authority to take this property.

1 THE COURT: Let me hear from Ms. Green-Kelly.

MS. GREEN-KELLY: The problem with the argument is the <u>Western Union v. Pennsylvania</u> case which led to the priority rules, in <u>Western Union</u> there was a judgment by a Pennsylvania State Court against Western Union to escheat unclaimed money orders that had been sold in Pennsylvania.

The Supreme Court reversed that judgment because the Court said the Pennsylvania Court has no jurisdiction over other states that may claim it and the potential owners possibly exposing Western Union to multiple liability which would be a due process right violation.

In <u>Texas v. New Jersey</u> the Court starts out by saying, hey, the reason we are allowing original jurisdiction here is because we held in <u>Western Union v. Pennsylvania</u> that we would be exposing companies to multiple liability if everybody wasn't under the same jurisdiction of the Court to decide the rights.

The problem with what counsel is saying and New Jersey's position is, is that if New Jersey can take the property under the secondary rule, even though another state already has the priority authority, and the Third Circuit has said that that right, the primary rule right exists regardless of

what that state decides to do with it, as long as they have an escheat statute, you are ending up with a situation where what if the other state changes their

4 law and now they are wanting the property back?

If there is a judgment in New Jersey asking

NFI to send that property over to New Jersey, the

other states, especially the ones that have B to B

exemptions, they are not going to come to New Jersey

and get it. But NFI is now having to escheat it to

another state. It isn't consistent with the priority

rules which are designed to bring the property to the

state closest to the owner. The owner is in some

other state and they are not looking in New Jersey for

this property. It's not even consistent with the

policies underlying the priority rules.

Jersey case makes clear, and your Honor is correct, at the time of Texas v. New Jersey in 1965 not all states had escheat statutes, and so the second prong of that secondary rule was designed to deal with that situation. But if property is supposed to escheat to the state closest to the owner, then it certainly couldn't possibly mean that it goes to New Jersey if the person is in Arizona.

In Arizona, for example, the statute is that

if it's a business-to-business transaction, the dormancy period is merely tolled. It's not even an exemption. It just says that the property doesn't become dormant until the parties stop engaging in a business-to-business relationship. So New Jersey is trying to take that property even though some day it may be escheatable to Arizona.

The bottom line is that the priority rules are substantive rules and the primary rule fails only if the holder lacks addresses, that's not the case here, and if the other state doesn't have an escheat statute, and that is not this case here.

THE COURT: I think the Third Circuit, Mr.

Peitz, is very clear in its decision in talking about even though there may be potential windfall to the debtor. Here it would be NFI. There it was the FCC issuers. That's not the concern.

If you follow the trilogy of those three

Supreme Court cases, the whole point was, we don't

want to have different factual situations determining

how things come out and having these kinds of

arguments on a constant basis. So they made two

priority rules that were very clear and we are

supposed to be following them.

And you really do want to carve out another

niche of saying, okay, but if you've got an escheat statute, but the escheat statute is worded in a certain way that could exempt this property so that you have no interest in it, or you haven't actually taken any action, then we can step in.

There is no such carve-out that was created in those priority rules for those decisions by states that may decide if you are in a business-to-business relationship we are not going to collect from you.

We'll have certain dormancy periods that may be different than yours. That they may do so because it remains under the first rule it is their right to escheat or not to escheat.

I do find, therefore, that on this issue as to dealing with out-of-state debtors, customers, whatever they are, payroll people, I don't know who they are at this point, for which last known addresses exist, then a likelihood of success has been established as to that area.

Now, let's talk about what else we've got here that doesn't fall within that. We've got apparently a category for which documents simply don't exist. Is that correct?

MR. PEITZ: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: No longer. As to those --

28 MS. GREEN-KELLY: Your Honor, can I address 1 2 those? 3 THE COURT: Yes, please. MS. GREEN-KELLY: So Delaware v. New York 4 5 defined sort of expanded and said the priority rule is a three-step process. The first step is consistent 6 7 with the derivative rights doctrine and it says first 8 you have to identify the property, and the property is defined by whether there is a state law that has 9 given -- and this is because it's intangible property, 10 whether someone has the right and obligation, a 11 12 property interest in being paid for something. 13 To the extent that the State is asserting that 14 the amounts that they are estimating is property, that is contrary to the priority rules and is preempted. 15 16 To the extent, however, that they are asserting it is

a penalty for failure to keep records, then it is a penalty.

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That will matter because we are going to be filing an amended complaint either today or tomorrow that will remove the state law claim, but will be replaced with a federal claim that will go to these issues. To the extent it is simply a penalty, then it is not unclaimed property and it isn't necessarily preempted by the priority rules.

So the real question -- and I've been having a discussion with counsel this morning. He says the estimate is an estimate of unclaimed property. In that case it's preempted.

MR. PEITZ: Your Honor, a couple of points.

The first is that the state law at issue, what it says is, if you don't have records -- you are required to keep records. If you don't, we have to make a reasonable estimate of what the property is because we can't know. You don't have records.

They can't use it as both a sword and a shield to say, well, we don't have records. So you should presume that some of these are out of state. But at the same time we are not going to keep records, so, well, yeah, you can't do that either. They are trying to use it two different ways to get around the fact that they didn't keep records.

Whether or not this estimate includes property, whether it's something else, that is a state law issue. The state law says it has to be reasonable. That's going to be a determination by the State Courts because under the 11th Amendment they can only get a preliminary injunction for a violation of federal law. But the determination of what the amount is that's reasonable or not reasonable is a question

for the State Court to determine.

and dealing with this in the context of the priority rules we are discussing is, I know that there is major dispute as to how they came up with their estimate and what that is. And I know you are going to also argue whether you think it's a penalty, an estimate, or whatever, and there may be other due process arguments you want to make in that regard. That's not what I have today. That's the problem with that.

I don't know that I can adequately deal with this as a preemption of priority argument at this point without actually getting into how the estimates are being calculated and whether it's something that could be attacked at this stage or not. I really don't.

Because if you want to go back and say, and you think the method should be, while looking at the years surrounding that for which we have records, 80 percent of them dealt with out-of-state and 20 percent were in-state, or whatever, and you want to make that argument, I don't any basis to do that at this point and to say that's how they should go about doing it, and I don't know that you have any basis to determine that either.

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This is one of those situations where, frankly, if there are no records, I don't even know what we are talking about by way of escheat of property, of intangible property, because we don't know that anything existed. But I understand the stature is written in an estimate. I don't think today is my day to determine whether I can rule on what that means and whether it should be enjoined and I definitely will need more on that. So at this point I just don't feel that I can, that I have a likelihood of success as to how that's going to come out. MS. GREEN-KELLY: And, your Honor, because we are going to be amending the complaint to add a due process claim concerning that issue.

THE COURT: I thought that's what I should have seen. I didn't have that argument and I didn't have it in the complaint.

MS. GREEN-KELLY: And I guess what I'd be asking since we will file that complaint today is whether we can also seek a preliminary injunction and brief that issue to be able to at least toll this until we can brief it on an expedited basis.

THE COURT: You don't really mean a preliminary injunction. What you are really asking is

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                                                                 32
         the same way I did on the order to show cause and just
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      2
         to say that I restrain you until I can hear the
      3
         argument on it.
                 MS. GREEN-KELLY: Yes.
      4
                 MR. PEITZ: Your Honor, the amended complaint
      5
      6
         hasn't been filed yet.
      7
                 THE COURT: I understand.
     8
                 MR. PEITZ: I don't even know what they are
      9
         really asking for until I see the amended complaint.
                 THE COURT: I understand.
     10
                 MR. PEITZ: There may be an 11th Amendment
     11
     12
         problem with what they are asking for if it is really
     13
         a state law issue.
     14
                 THE COURT: I can't give you that until we see
    15
         what the complaint looks like. Obviously, you are
         going to make your application with it.
     16
                 Let me also tell you right now, I'm here
     17
         today, tomorrow, and Friday, and I'm gone next week on
     18
         vacation. So if you don't have it in by Friday, I'm
     19
         not seeing it for another week.
     20
     21
                 MS. GREEN-KELLY: We will have it in today.
                 THE COURT: I'll wait and see it. I don't
     22
     23
         think they are going to be taking action today anyway.
```

I can't deal with that issue until that's there.

at this moment I can't enjoin those estimates.

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25

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Now, let's get to the other factors of the
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 2
    preliminary injunction, in any event.
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            MR. PEITZ: Your Honor, I just want to say,
    since you had already found that on two of the
 4
    plaintiff's claims they cannot get a preliminary
 5
    injunction, if there is an injunction issued it should
 6
 7
    be a very narrow one just covering the alleged
 8
    offending amounts and not the remaining parts of the
 9
    assessment.
            THE COURT: I think I knew that.
10
11
            MR. PEITZ: Okay. I just wanted to be sure,
12
    your Honor.
13
            THE COURT: It will be limited. I haven't
14
    gotten to the last factors.
15
            MR. PEITZ:
                        Yes, your Honor. I apologize.
16
            THE COURT: Have a seat for a moment.
17
            I think we can easily deal with those as well.
18
    And now we are only dealing with the assessments that
    relate to the out-of-state owners for whom last known
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20
    addresses are known, whatever those categories may be,
21
    and that's the part we are looking to enjoin.
22
            Now, on irreparable harm, the same argument is
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    being made by the plaintiff as was made obviously in
24
    the American Express case which is based on sovereign
25
    immunity doctrines. You cannot bring suit to recover
```

these if you had to pay them currently.

Mr. Peitz, your arguments about that there's some process in the state by which you can object, frankly, some of this has already occurred. They would have to be defending the lawsuit, arguing it there, and if they lose at that level for whatever reason paying it over before I've had an opportunity to make the appropriate constitutional determinations, and they wouldn't be able to file a separate lawsuit.

That is not the kind of thing it's talking about. It's really the same exact argument as in the American Express case. So I can find irreparable harm because they would not be able to file a separate suit to recover.

Looking at the balancing of the harms here, essentially the State is saying, well, we don't have the use of this money. Argument could be made in every one of these cases and obviously I know what the harm is to the plaintiff.

Frankly, on this record similar to, as I said, the other escheat case that we decided, I would find that the factors were satisfied and provide a preliminary injunction only as to the category that I have identified at this time without seeing what else you might find and file.

```
So I think that resolves what we have today.
1
 2
    Is that correct?
 3
            MR. PEITZ: Just the issue of the bond, your
 4
    Honor.
 5
            THE COURT: I have the arguments. A bond is
    appropriate in these cases. It's the exception not to
 6
 7
    provide one. One of the arguments being made
 8
    obviously by the plaintiff was the argument that there
    really is not a monetary damage to the State.
 9
            I know that I did impose a bond in the
10
    American Express. It was relatively a small amount.
11
12
    Frankly, I can't even remember what it was.
13
            This is not going to be to post a bond for the
14
    full amount. No, it's not. And, frankly, I don't
    have any arguments that would indicate we are not
15
    going to find National Freight sometime in the future.
16
17
    They are a rather large company. I don't even know
18
    now what the amounts are that we are talking about for
    the category for which I am granting the preliminary
19
    injunction.
20
21
            What are the amounts? Do we have any idea of
22
    what the entire amount is?
            MS. GREEN-KELLY: Well, your Honor, certainly
23
24
    the one that is about $293,000 is entirely addressed
25
    property to other states. The $242,000 amount we are
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36
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going to have to go look at it, and also some of it
has been paid already.

With respect to the credits, we have to go

With respect to the credits, we have to go and look to see how much. But certainly a lot of their business is outside of New Jersey.

MR. PEITZ: Your Honor, very briefly.

The number that plaintiff's counsel is discussing is on Exhibit D to the Prashant Shah certification.

THE COURT: Just give me a basic idea what the numbers are.

MR. PEITZ: There is a column for items with address in exempt states, and also a column for items with address in conditionally exempt states. That amount is \$21,225.56 plus \$194. Those are the amounts where the addresses were known. There is also an amount for an estimated liability.

THE COURT: I'm not enjoining the estimated liability.

MR. PEITZ: Yes, I understand. But that's the other column.

So in this case, there is those amounts, plus statutory interest is continuing to accrue. This particular assessment was estimated through 2013. So it has been accruing a long time. So the amount of

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    the bond should be consistent with those amounts, plus
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    interest.
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            THE COURT: What are the amounts?
            MR. PEITZ: 21,000, plus statutory interest
 4
    such as prime plus 10%. I'm not sure. I have to
 5
    discuss with the client what that amount actually
 6
7
    would be. I'm not prepared right now to specify what
8
    that amount would be.
            THE COURT: I'm imposing a very, very modest
 9
    bond in this case. Post a bond for $10,000.
10
11
    amounts are not great here, and I'm not concerned
12
    about whether in the end they will be able to pay.
13
            With that, we'll enter a limited preliminary
14
    injunction order.
15
            I would like to see counsel in chambers,
16
    please.
17
            Thank you.
18
            THE CLERK: All rise.
            (Proceedings concluded.)
19
20
21
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23
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25
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38 1 2 CERTIFICATE 3 4 5 I, Vincent Russoniello, Official United States 6 7 Court Reporter and Certified Court Reporter of the 8 State of New Jersey, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of the proceedings as taken stenographically by and before me 10 at the time, place and on the date hereinbefore set 11 12 forth. 13 I do further certify that I am neither a relative 14 nor employee nor attorney nor counsel of any of the parties to this action, and that I am neither a 15 relative nor employee of such attorney or counsel, and 16 17 that I am not financially interested in this action. 18 19 20 21 22 23 S/Vincent Russoniello 24 Vincent Russoniello, CCR Certificate No. 675 25

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